

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please replace claims 15, 16, 17 and 19 with the following clean version of amended claims 15, 16, 17 and 19, and add new claims 22 and 23:

1-14. (canceled)

15. (currently amended) A method for protecting a coating of paint on an article, including an automobile body, from scratches, the method comprising coating onto the paint a protective composition which is a water-washable combination of acrylic resins and a caustic, wherein the composition forms a water-washable coating and is removed from the article by washing with only water, the method further comprising removing the water-washable coating by rinsing with only water.

16. (previously presented) A coating composition for protecting a coating of paint, the composition comprising:

from about 5.5 to about 12 weight percent of at least one film-forming acrylic resin;

from about 5 to about 12 weight percent of a combination acrylic resin which functions both as a viscosity controller and a plasticizer;

from about 1 to about 3 weight percent of a caustic selected from the group consisting of sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, and mixtures thereof so that the composition has a pH of from about 7.5 to about 9.0; and

from about 73 to about 88.5 weight percent water, all weight percents being based on the total weight of the composition,

whereby the resultant composition has an acid number between about 60 and about 110, and the combination of the resins with the caustic results in a water-washable coating composition that is removed by rinsing with water.

17. (previously presented) The coating composition of claim 16, wherein said acrylic resin functioning as a viscosity controller is present in an amount which controls the viscosity of the composition in the range of from about 100 to about 500 centipoise.

18. (canceled)

19. (original) A coating composition for protecting a coating of paint, the composition comprising:

from about 4 to about 8 weight percent of a first film-forming acrylic resin having an average molecular weight of from about 200,000 to about 260,000;

from about 5 to about 7 weight percent of a second acrylic resin having a weight average molecular weight of from about 2,000 to about 10,000;

from about 1 to about 3 weight percent of a caustic selected from the group consisting of sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, and mixtures thereof so that the composition has a pH of from about 7.5 to about 9.0;

a viscosity controller in an amount which controls the viscosity of the composition in the range of from about 100 to about 500 centipoise; and

from about 82 to about 90 weight percent water, all weight percents being based on the total weight of the composition,

whereby the resultant composition has an acid number between about 60 and about 110, and the combination of the resins with the caustic results in a water-washable coating composition that is removed by rinsing with water.

20. (canceled)

21. (canceled)

22. (new) A method for protecting a coating of paint, comprising:

coating onto the paint a protective water-only washable composition including,

from about 5.5 to about 12 weight percent of at least one film-forming acrylic resin;

from about 5 to about 12 weight percent of a combination acrylic resin which functions both as a viscosity controller and a plasticizer;

from about 1 to about 3 weight percent of a caustic selected from the group consisting of sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, and mixtures thereof so that the composition has a pH of from about 7.5 to about 9.0; and

from about 73 to about 88.5 weight percent water, all weight percents being based on the total weight of the composition,

whereby the resultant coated composition has an acid number between about 60 and about 110, and the combination of the resins with the caustic results in a water-washable coating composition; and

rinsing with only water to remove the water-only washable protective coating.

23. (new) A method for protecting a coating of paint, comprising:

coating onto the paint a protective water-only washable composition including,

from about 4 to about 8 weight percent of a first film-forming acrylic resin having an average molecular weight of from about 200,000 to about 260,000;

from about 5 to about 7 weight percent of a second acrylic resin having a weight average molecular weight of from about 2,000 to about 10,000;

from about 1 to about 3 weight percent of a caustic selected from the group consisting of sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, and mixtures thereof so that the composition has a pH of from about 7.5 to about 9.0;

a viscosity controller in an amount which controls the viscosity of the composition in the range of from about 100 to about 500 centipoise; and

from about 82 to about 90 weight percent water, all weight percents being based on the total weight of the composition,

whereby the resultant coated composition has an acid number between about 60 and about 110, and the combination of the resins with the caustic results in a water-washable coating composition; and

rinsing with only water to remove the water-only washable protective coating.